

Section 5: Identifying and Selecting Grant Projects



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Identifying Grant Projects



The State should use the identification procedures included in its Administration Plan to identify potential Hazard Mitigation Grant Program projects that are consistent with the State Hazard Mitigation Plan. Ideally, this should be accomplished by the State hazard mitigation team.

TIP: States that do not have a State hazard mitigation team should refer to [Chapter 4 of the Post-Disaster Hazard Mitigation Planning Guidance for State and Local Governments \(DAP-12\)](#) for detailed guidance on the development of State hazard mitigation teams.

Setting State Priorities

A State committed to hazard mitigation will have adopted a proactive stance that is based in planning. Ideally, the State has pre-identified its statewide mitigation strategy and potential HMGP projects during the development of its up-to-date, comprehensive Hazard Mitigation Plan. Such a plan will expedite not only post-disaster mitigation funding, but also use of pre-disaster resources.

The State should submit project applications that reflect these planning objectives and strategies.

Pre-Disaster Funding To Identify Projects

The State may use annual cooperative agreement funding to update or expand its Hazard Mitigation Plan. With this “ready” stance, the State need only examine the mitigation opportunities revealed by the latest disaster before final selection of potential projects is made.

Early Implementation of Mitigation Strategies

Potential projects may be identified during the preliminary damage assessment or post-disaster hazard mitigation team process. The Interagency Hazard Mitigation Teams and Hazard Mitigation Survey Teams conduct site visits immediately after a disaster occurs and compile their recommendations for a mitigation strategy. This feedback often identifies immediate mitigation opportunities and enables early implementation of appropriate strategies.

Another activity that may assist in the identification of potential mitigation measures is the review of Project Worksheets for the Public Assistance Program. These inspection reports may identify site-specific issues as well as widespread problems. The State Hazard Mitigation Officer should discuss types of damage, eligible measures under the Public Assistance Program and HMGP, and potential applicants and projects with State and Federal Public Assistance Officers.

Identify and Notify Potential Applicants

Following the identification of potential measures, the State should contact all potential applicants, notify them that HMGP funds are available, and provide application information.

Potential applicants include State agencies, local governments, private non-profit organizations, and Native American tribes.

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Notification Opportunities

Notification opportunities include:

- The Federal-State Meeting, where the State Hazard Mitigation Officer may address the attendees;
- Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Briefings specifically designed to inform potential applicants of existing opportunities; and
- Public Assistance Applicants Briefings, where the HMGP can be discussed.

Notification Methods

Notification methods may include:

- Public notices;
- Statewide direct mail effort;
- News releases; and
- Formal meetings and briefings.

Disseminate Full Information

Ensure that potential applicants receive information on the application process, program eligibility, and key deadlines.

The State Hazard Mitigation Officer is responsible for ensuring that the grant application submitted to FEMA is complete. It is in the State's interest that the State Hazard Mitigation Officer provide in-depth program information to all potential applicants so that their applications to the State are complete.

It is key for States to set clear priorities and encourage applicants to propose projects within those priorities. This can focus application submissions and reduce the State's review burden.

One effective manner to disseminate program information is through a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Applicants Briefing. A sample Applicants Briefing Letter, Agenda for 1-Hour Presentation, and Pre-Application Form are included as Job Aids 5-1, 5-2, and 5-3, respectively.



Job Aid 5-1,
5-2, and 5-3



TIP: Consult FEMA's HMGP Applicant Handbook for detailed guidance.

Selection Criteria

Total applications from potential subgrantees often exceed the total amount of available grant funds. The State is responsible for reviewing and ranking potential projects by priority.

The State will use the criteria delineated in the Administrative Plan to thoroughly review all project applications. The State must ensure that all potential measures it selects:

- Meet minimum eligibility criteria. The selection criteria must comply with the minimum project eligibility under 44 CFR 206.434(b).



TIP: Section 7 describes the five minimum criteria for project eligibility.

- Meet minimum selection criteria. The projects must also meet the three minimum project selection criteria under 44 CFR 206.435(b).
 1. Best-fit within the overall development plan and/or the hazard mitigation plan for the area. The State should review appropriate plans, such as land use and comprehensive plans to ensure that the projects conform with State or local government planning objectives.
 2. Address severe detrimental impacts. Selected projects should be those that clearly reduce loss of life, loss of essential services, damage to critical facilities, or severe economic hardship.
 3. Have the greatest potential to reduce future losses after examining the alternatives available.

Other considerations the State may add to its evaluation criteria include:

- Repetitive history of damage at the site.
- Severity of hazard and vulnerability at the project location.
- Level of protection provided by the project.
- Measures designed to accomplish multi-objectives, including damage reduction, environmental enhancement, and economic recovery.
- The applicant community's participation in the National Flood Insurance Program, compliance record, and Community Rating System level.
- Protection of primary residences versus secondary homes and businesses.
- Whether property to be protected is covered by flood or hazard insurance.
- The applicant's ability to provide local cost-share.
- Local commitment and public buy-in.



Job Aid 5-1

Applicants Briefing Invitation Letter

Letters should be sent to all potential applicants notifying them of the availability of funds under the Hazard Mitigation Program and inviting them to attend the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Applicants Briefing. This letter provides general information on the program and includes scheduling information for the briefing.

Dear State and Local Government Agencies/Private Non-Profit Organizations/Native American Tribes and Tribal Organizations:

As a result of damage suffered recently in State, the President has declared State as a major disaster area. This disaster declaration makes Federal disaster assistance available to those counties in the disaster area. Federal disaster assistance is authorized under the Stafford Act.

The Stafford Act also authorizes the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for all counties in the State. This program funds cost-effective hazard mitigation measures. Hazard mitigation is defined as sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from hazards and their effects.

Hazard mitigation projects should, therefore, reduce future disaster relief expenditures for the repair or replacement of public and private property, and expenditures for the relief of personal loss, hardship, and suffering. Federal funds are available for up to 75 percent of the cost of the hazard mitigation measure. To be eligible, projects must satisfy specific criteria.

A briefing on the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program will be held on date, time, at location. Eligible applicants include State and local government entities, private non-profit organizations, and Native American tribes. The briefing will provide an overview of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and will specifically address:

- Eligibility Criteria;
- Project Identification and Selection;
- Application Process;
- Project Management;
- Technical Assistance; and
- Available Funding.

For additional information, please contact name, title of the State emergency management agency at telephone number.

Sincerely,

State Director



Job Aid 5-1



Job Aid 5-2

Agenda for 1-Hour Presentation

I.	Welcome	
II.	Introduction	10 minutes
	A. Purpose and Objectives of Meeting	
	B. Explanation of Hazard Mitigation and the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program	
III.	Overview of Hazard Mitigation Grant Program	40 minutes
	A. Intent	
	B. Eligible Applicants	
	C. Project Eligibility	
	D. Project Identification	
	E. Project Selection	
	F. Available Funding	
	G. Technical Assistance	
	H. Application Schedule	
	I. Contact for Additional Information	
IV.	Questions and Answers/Conclusion	10 minutes

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Job Aid 5-3

Sample Pre-Application Form

Date: _____	Disaster No: _____
Name of Applicant: _____	
Project Contact: (Name)	_____
(Title)	_____
(Agency)	_____
(Address)	_____

(Phone No.)	_____
Brief Description of Problems To Be Solved:	_____

Location of Project:	_____

Brief Description of Alternatives Under Consideration:	_____

Total Estimated Cost:	_____
Source(s) of Funding:	_____

